1. A method of preventing and treating SARS by administering a respiratory tract composition having a pH of from about 3.0 to about 5.5 to areas of the upper respiratory tract, wherein the respiratory tract composition comprises:

(a) from about 0.001% to about 20% by weight of an organic acid; and

(b) from about 0.01% to about 20% by weight of a metal compound.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the organic acid is selected from the group consisting of ascorbic acid, salicylic acid, fumaric acid, benzoic acid, glutaric acid, lactic acid, citric acid, malonic acid, acetic acid, glycolic acid, malic acid, adipic acid, succinic acid, aspartic acid, phthalic acid, tartaric acid, glutamic acid, gluconic acid, pyroglutamic acid, and mixtures thereof.

3. The method of Claim 1 wherein the metal compound is selected from the group consisting of salicylates, fumarates, benzoates, glutarates, lactates, citrates, malonates, acetates, glycolates, thiosalicylates, adipates, succinates, gluconates, aspartates, glycinates, tartarates, malates, maleates, ascorbates, chlorides, sulphates, nitrates, phosphates, fluorides, iodides, pidolates, and mixtures thereof.

4. The method of Claim 3 wherein the metal compound is an acetate metal compound.

5. The method of Claim 4 wherein the acetate is zinc acetate.

6. The method of Claim 1 wherein the respiratory tract composition further comprises a mucoadhesive polymer selected from the group consisting of carboxypolymethylenes, carboxyvinyl polymers, homopolymers of acrylic acid crosslinked with an allyl ether of pentaerythritol, homopolymers of acrylic acid crosslinked with an allyl ether of sucrose, homopolymers of acrylic acid crosslinked with divinyl glycol, natural polymers, polymeric cellulose derivatives, polyvinyl pyrrolidones (PVPs), dextran polymers, polyethylene oxide polymers, thermoreversible polymers, ionic responsive polymers, copolymers of polymethyl vinyl ether and maleic anhydride, and mixtures thereof.

7. The method of Claim 6 wherein the respiratory tract composition has a viscosity of from about 1 cps to about 2000 cps.

8. The method of Claim 7 wherein the mucoadhesive polymer is a cellulose derivative selected from the group consisting of hydroxypropyl methylcelluloses, hydroxypropyl celluloses, methyl cellulose polymers, carboxymethyl cellulose polymers, salts of carboxymethyl cellulose, and mixtures thereof.

9. The method of Claim 7 wherein the mucoadhesive polymer is a thermoreversible polymer selected from the group consisting of poloxamers, ethylhydroxy ethylcelluloses, and mixtures thereof.

10. The method of Claim 6 wherein the respiratory tract composition further comprises a pH adjusting agent selected from the group consisting of sodium bicarbonate, sodium phosphate, sodium hydroxide, ammonium hydroxide, sodium stannate, triethanolamine, sodium citrate, disodium succinate, and mixtures thereof.

11. The method of Claim 1 wherein the respiratory tract composition is a nasal composition.

12. The method of Claim 11 wherein the nasal composition is selected from the group consisting of nasal liquids, nasal sprays, nasal inhalants, nasal powders, nasal drops, nasal irrigations, and mixtures thereof.

13. The method of Claim 12 wherein the nasal composition is a nasal spray.

14. The method of Claim 13 wherein the nasal spray comprises from about 40% to about 99.98% by weight of a pharmaceutically acceptable vehicle selected from the group consisting of water, ethanol, propylene glycol, polyethylene glycol, transcutol, glycerol, a liquid aerosol propellant, and mixtures thereof.

15. The method of Claim 14 wherein the nasal spray contacts mucosal tissue and fluid.